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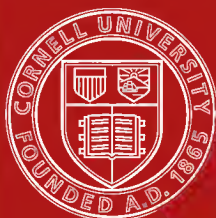
Labour legislation in the Polish Republic



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LABOUR LEGISLATION  
IN THE POLISH REPUBLIC



LABOUR  
LEGISLATION  
IN THE  
POLISH REPUBLIC

BY  
GUSTAW SIMON

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Those, desirous of duly appraising the efforts of the reborn Polish State in the sphere of social legislation, should not lose sight of the following facts for a single moment:

1) The sovereign Polish State has been in existence only since November 1918 and the first Diet in independent Poland began its debates on February 9th 1919.

2) The Polish State arose from three provinces, of which each possessed a separate political, economic, administrative and legislative organization: in one of them, that is to say in the former Russian annexed territory, there was almost no social legislation at all, whilst any private initiative in this direction was considered as crime; in the former Prussian province there existed, it is true, a very developed social legislation, but thoroughly centralized and in no way corresponding to the national and social individuality of the Polish population; in the former Austrian province this branch of State activity was rather feebly provided for, owing to the general, long existing dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy.

3) A considerable part of the Polish territories underwent during the war a most terrible devastation either owing to direct events of the war, or to the rule of the occupants,

which practically destroyed all industry. Plundering the factories of their machines and raw materials, the occupants did all in their power to impoverish the population and to deprive them of work, thus forcing the Polish working class to emigrate to Germany.

4) The legislative work of the Polish State was carried on, until quite recently, amidst the clash of arms and a further devastation of the country, as a result of the war which Poland was compelled to wage, accompanied by a simultaneous devaluation of the Polish currency and the necessity of creating afresh the most elementary bases of state administration.

5) The Bolshevik state became one of the immediate neighbours of Poland and worked with an intense outlay of energy and money to revolutionize the masses of the Polish nation in a Soviet spirit, the other neighbour is Germany, who is making all efforts possible to weaken the Polish State and to bring about its speedy decay.

6) The boundaries of the Polish State are not yet finally established, they depend on the one hand, on the result of the development of events with regard to the Polish — Lithuanian question, and to the other — and this will have a particularly great influence on of social legislation — on the result of the plebiscite in the coal-producing, highly industrialized district of Upper Silesia.

The fact must be added to the above that

Poland is compelled to solve the problems of her existence in nearly complete isolation, often striving against powerful European forces, who have not yet all realized, that a strong Poland supported in her wellfounded aims is the necessary and possibly the sole foundation of a lasting peace in Eastern Europe.

It is only by considering the characteristics given above of the situation in which Poland is bound to erect the edifice of her social legislation, that the real value of what has already been accomplished, may be understood.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION.

The questions of social policy are centralized in Poland in the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and partly in the Ministry of Public Health.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection arose gradually from the Labour Department, which was already founded during the German occupation in 1917 by the then existing Temporary State Council, but was compelled to limit its action exclusively to preparatory theoretic work, the occupants not allowing any practical or legislative Polish action.

The characteristic of the present organization of the Ministry is the union of the labour question and the question of social protection. This

proves an obvious tendency to place the problems of the protection of the population (young persons, orphans, the aged etc.) on the ground of a rational and truly modern social economy, first and foremost preventive and protective. The present Minister of Labour and Social Protection is the engineer Edward Peplowski; his predecessors were Messrs. George Iwanowski and Bronisław Ziemięcki. They were all candidates of one or the other of our Labour parties.

At the moment of writing (October 1920) the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection contains 768 officials of both sexes and is divided into 5 sections corresponding to its wide sphere of action:

1. Labour Protection Section,
2. Labour Insurance,
3. Employment Agencies,
4. Social Protection,
5. General.

The budget of the Ministry from the period lasting from April to December 1920 was estimated at 226 millions Polish Marks, but it must be remarked here, that the real expenses for social policy are considerable greater, for part of them are covered by the Ministry of Public Health (for instance the housing question) and a part by the Presidium of the Council of the Ministers (share for Poland in the International Labour Bureau attached to the League of Nations) and the Ministry of the former Prussian province

to which the financial side of social politics in Posen and on the Lower Vistula is entrusted, until the final administrative unification of the Polish provinces will be accomplished.

### LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

A long series of decrees, issued directly by the government of the Polish Republic, whilst there was still no Diet, and of Bills discussed and accepted by the Polish Diet, illustrate the efforts made by Poland hitherto in the sphere of social legislation. We point them out and characterize them successively, according to the general categories of social policy.

### PROTECTION OF LABOUR.

On November 23rd 1918 a decree was issued and in December 18th 1919 a Bill was passed respecting the length of the working day in industry and commerce, on the strength of which an 8 hours working day was introduced in Poland in all industrial and mining establishments, in artisan's workshops, on the railways and other means of communication, as well as in all commercial establishments. On Saturday work is to last only 6 hours, the weekly work therefore cannot exceed 46 hours; in relation to labour specially injurious to the health this period may even be shortened.

It must be stated here that the International Labour Conference in Washington established

the maximum weekly working hours not as being 46 hours but as 48 hours, so that Poland has gone further in that direction.

The prolongation of working hours is permissible according to Polish legislation only in special exceptional cases, threatening the lives of the workmen or the safety of the whole establishment. But even in these circumstances work must not exceed 12 hours, unless there is danger in delay. In establishments where continuous work is necessary needed, e. g. in sugar factories during the season etc., the prolongation of the working hours may be granted by the Minister, but only to an average of 56 hours weekly, but even this only after a previous agreement both with the workers' trade unions and with the employers' unions.

In special circumstances, e. g. for stock-taking, the Minister may grant a permission for extra work, which must not, however, exceed 120 hours yearly, or 4 hours daily.

All extra work must be paid at least 50% dearer than normal work; for extra work exceeding two hours daily or for extra work at night or on Sunday, the normal payment is increased by at least 100%.

After every 6 hours of work, the workman must have at least one hour's recreation if, however; the character of the work does not allow to stop the machines, he must be enabled to have a meal during the time of productive work.

An accurate fixation of the working hours in commerce, that is to say the time of opening and closing of the shops has been left to the self — governing bodies, whilst the work in the transport industry, on the railways etc. is determined by special ministerial orders. All this, however, can only take place within the limits of the principal 8 hours — day Bill, and after the opinion of the competent trade unions leagues. Labour Inspectors and administrative authorities of the first instance are to superintend the execution of the Bill.

The punishment for its violation ranges up to 5000 marks fine or 3 months imprisonment. It must further be stated that the application of the orders of the law in question in establishments, in which formerly a longer day was obligatory, cannot in any event entail a decrease of the wages. This is clearly expressed in the Bill of December 18th 1919.

By the orders recapitulated above, it can be clearly seen, that the length of the working-day has been regulated in Poland in a most progressive manner, as it does not only limit the working-hours to 46 weekly, but even introduces a minimum increase of remuneration for extra work.

It can only be hoped that the above reform will not place the Polish State in an unfavourable position for competing with other industrial states, should the latter continue to retain the former longer working hours.

The law respecting the length of the working day came into force in the Polish Republic on February 8th 1920 and its exact fulfilment is carefully superintended both by the State authorities and the workmen's trade unions.

Another important legislative act in the sphere of social policy was the LABOUR INSPECTION DECREE, issued in January 3rd 1919 and extended in March 2nd 1920. This decree possesses special importance in the former Russian annexate, the most industrialized part of Poland, where, from the time when the incapable, corrupt and chauvinistic Russian Factory Inspectors have left, has existed a partial and provisional industrial superintendence organized by the Polish self-government, but almost paralysed by the German occupation authorities.

The Labour Inspection, organized on the strength of the decree of 3. 1. 1919, places this institution on the wide base of a real protection of labour. At its head is the Chief Labour Inspector, to whom the district inspectors of both sexes are subordinate, the latter in turn having sub-inspectors at their disposal. The inspectors must possess a high theoretical and practical education, must show a knowledge of social questions, of workmen's legislation, of industrial hygiene etc. They are examined before being appointed. The Ministry has organized special courses of instruction for candidates for the position of inspectors.



The order of the decree, which foresees so-called inspectors assistants, is worthy of special notice, these assistants being elected from among the trade union agents. The chief duty of the inspectors is to superintend the fulfilment of the laws and orders concerning all conditions of labour, its duration and sub-division as well as the labour contracts, wages tariffs, the prices of articles sold to the workmen by the employers, the education of the apprentices, the fulfilment of the conditions of public insurance etc. Further the inspectors must investigate the labour and wage conditions in their districts, must collect statistics, must follow the relations between capital and labour and in particular must take an active part in the conclusion of collective contracts and the settling of disputes arising out of them.

The action of the inspectors extends to all spheres of labour without exception, farming included.

The inspectors enjoy far-reaching executive powers: they may draw up protocols, denounce trespassers to the Law Courts, act as accusers, levy fines to certain amount and finally issue local executive instructions, until the formation, foreseen in the Decree, of Consultation Commissions, attached to the inspectors.

Labour inspection, based on the above principles, is up till now, chiefly applied to what was formerly Russian Poland and is at present introduced into Galicia. In the former Prussian

province the old industrial inspectorate, based on the German law, still continues its work,—and also a special Farming Inspectorship, recently introduced. Shortly a complete unification of the Labour Inspection will take place throughout the territory of the Republic. Up to the present moment the Ministry has appointed 60 Labour Inspectors, amongst them 18 Farming Inspectors.

Inspectors, acting now for the Labour Ministry enjoy the sincere confidence of the population and in many [cases are forced to act the part of mediators and arbitrators between employees and employers. This role however will soon be ended, as it surpasses the sphere of action of the inspectorship; it will be taken over by special bodies.

A Labour Inspection Bill will shortly be brought before the Diet.

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On March 28th 1919 the Polish Diet voted the *Bill for settling collective conflicts between workers and employers*; this Bill was later extended on August 1th 1919 and finally on January 23th 1920 its principles are also applied to collective disputes between owners of town houses property and caretakers of such.

It must be stated here, that the above Bill forms merely the introduction to a great arbitration legislation (Labour Courts) which has already been prepared by the Ministry of Labour.

The law concerning agricultural conflicts possesses a special importance for Poland, owing to the agricultural character of many parts of the Republic, all the more, as the complete neglect of social policy in regard to agricultural labourers during the period of Poland's subjection, has accumulated a number of serious grievances the non-regulation of which might have threatened the state with the most critical consequences. The Bill of August 1 avoided these in time.


It foresees three degrees of settling the disputes in question: 1) by the intermediation of the Labour Inspector, 2) Conciliation Commission and 3) Arbitration Commission.

The Labour Inspector in agriculture has the right to summon both parties personally or their delegates in order that they might come to an understanding and an agreement, or to organise a Conciliation Commission. The local legally registered employers' unions and the trade unions of the agricultural workers are recognised as suitable representatives of the parties for the whole district.

In the event of an immediate agreement not being arrived at, the law obliges both parties to resort to the Conciliation Commission, comprising an equal number of delegates from the professional unions of both sides, those neglecting the election of delegates to the commission or absent without excuse are subject to fines of 100—

3000 marks for employers and from 5—50 marks for the workmen.

The Arbitration Commission is referred to, when the above measures prove unsuccessful or when either of the parties claims the summoning of an Arbitration Commission and obtains the consent of the opposing party. The Arbitration Commission is formed of 3—5 representatives of the employers, and an equal number of representatives of the workers and a President appointed by consent of both parties, or in the event of non-agreement by the Ministry of Labour. Here also the representatives of the parties are delegates of their professional unions or, if the unions decline this or if they are non-existent, delegates elected ad hoc. The decisions of the Arbitration Commission, summoned to establish the conditions of work and wages throughout the whole district are binding for all employers and workers alike.

In the event of disputes arising out of collective bargaining the Arbitration Commission settles them. ! 

The work of the Commission is paid for from the State Treasury. Members of the Arbitration Commission receive daily allowances and payment of all expenses incurred by them from the same source. Procedure taken is gratis for both parties. Commission members neglecting their work are duly punished. In every district the Arbitration Commission meets monthly for the assizes, which last at least two days.

The Arbitration Commission has the right to claim the cross-examination of witnesses under oath by the competent Court of Law.

Labour contracts, whether concluded by agreement or by a decision of the Arbitration Commission, are subject to the general civil law, and possess executive power; an executive order, if necessary; is issued by the Court on a copy of the corresponding agreement being given or the decision of the Arbitration Commission witnessed by the Labour Inspector. At the request of the party interested the order must be issued by the Court of Law. Noncompliance with the decision of the Arbitration Commission by the Court is only possible in the event of clear violation of the law, or of a wrong interpretation of the same, in the event of the violation of the fundamental forms of the procedure or in the event of the Commission exceeding the limits of its competency.

All disputes arising from the non-fulfilment of the agreements concluded, are assigned by the inspector to the Arbitration Commission for investigation at the request of one of the parties; the consent of the other party is not necessary in this case, and the absence of the other party cannot hinder the course of the matter.

It must be remarked, finally, that the agreements brought about and the decisions taken by the Arbitration Commission form the base for the conclusion of individual labour agreements in the

district, which, however, cannot comprise less favourable conditions.

The above Bill, the carrying-out of which has not met with any great obstacles has formed hitherto, the turning point in the rural conditions in Poland.

It replaces chaos and one-sidedness, which have hitherto been so prevalent, by real equal rights of both sides and allows the hope to be entertained, that it will become the foundation of a rational development of the difficult problem of hired labour in agriculture.

By summoning professional unions of both sides to carry on conciliatory action leading to arbitration, it introduces the elements of order and organization, and a real responsibility, both moral and legal, where so often arbitrary action has caused great injury to the interests of the general public.

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The Bill fixing the working hours was accepted by the Diet on December 18th 1919, and received its indispensable completion by the *Regulations respecting holidays* comprised in the same Bill.

The question of holidays, especially in trade, was of special importance for Poland and her working-classes, owing to the fact that many establishments in the Republic belonging to Jews, observed Saturday only, as a day of rest, but did not observe Sunday, bringing about in this manner, not only a highly undesirable disunion

of labour principles but also and this specially in districts inhabited by the working classes a great rivalry for establishments closed on Sunday. Further, the opening of shops and workshops on Sunday, either forced the Christians to observe the Saturday holiday or else forced workmen of the Jewish faith exclusively to work in the said establishments.

Following the customs of the majorities and on the model of all civilized countries Poland introduced a general united principle of rest on Sunday, and on all the great Christian holidays, leaving, naturally, complete freedom to those who were desirous, besides of celebrating other holidays. The Sunday rest is very rigidly enforced by Polish law, and allows of exceptions only in the case of special institutions of public utility and necessity, such as railways, trams, eating houses etc.

Recently the communal administrations of several towns, with Warsaw at their head, abolished the early trading hours on holidays, which were legally recognized, and also introduced the compulsory daily closing of shops during the dinner hour from 1—3 p. m. It must be added here that following the exemple of State and self-governing the majority of private establishments of every kind, have introduced a so-called English Saturday, that is to say that work ends at 1 p. m.

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Amongst the Bills and Decrees already binding, in the Labour protection sphere, we must mention the Decree regarding *Workingmen's Trade Unions, Leagues* dated February 8th 1919.

The above decree foresees compulsory registration for the Professional Leagues of either one speciality or of closely related specialities should the said Leagues desire to obtain the rights and privileges comprised, in the decree. To acquire them the Labour inspection must be presented with the Statute of the League signed by at least 3 founders and containing the chief aims, problems, and principles of the Organization. The registration may be rejected only in the event of, the Statute exceeding the limits of the Decree respecting the Leagues or being inconsistent with legislation in general. A motive for the refusal must be given and a complaint may be made to the Civil Court.

The same orders concern the different kinds of Trade Unions Federations. A registered organization of this kind possesses all the characteristics and privileges of legal units, is entitled to conclude agreements and collective contracts. The Bill foresees the representation of registered Trade Union in consultative councils, attached to the Ministry of Labour, and grants to the organization the right to make its members responsible from a disciplinary point of view etc.

In the event of the violation of the law by the Union, it may be brought before a Law-



Court, and duly punished, either by means of a fine, or by suspension or dissolution. The Unions are obliged to present the Labour Inspector with a yearly report. The project of the Bill based on the Decree of February 8th is at present in the Diet Labour Commission.

Finally, in order to terminate the present category of the legislative acts of Poland, we must mention the Decree *regarding Workingmen's Agents, Mine Committees and Arbitration Commissions* in the mines of the Dąbrowa Coal area, published by the Minister of Labour on November 5th 1919.

This decree, however, although limited from a territorial point of view, concerns the most important Polish production, that is to say coal, which employs a very considerable part of the Polish proletariat and will assuredly become an important precedent for other categories of labour.

The origin of the above Decree is very curious. It arose on the strength of an agreement concluded on August 25th 1919, after a severe strike between the Delegates of the Council of Ministers of the Polish Republic, and the Professional Leagues of the mining industry.

On the base of this Decree each mine elects its Workingmen's Agent for 6 months at the vote of one from every hundred workers. The elections are direct, secret and proportional.

The age of 21 years must be attained by a workman to make him eligible.

The Workingmen's Agents are the assistants of the Mine Committees, they are mediators between the workmen of a mine, and the Mine Committee, in conflicts which arise with the mine administration and they report to the Committee the causes of the decrease of the productivity of labour, and also watch the regularity and assiduity of the work in the mines.

The Mine Committees are formed by the Trade Union boards from the Workingmen Agents; the number of members of the Committee depends on the number of workmen occupied in a mine; the maximum is 4 members. These Committees are organs of mediation between the Workingmen's Agents and the Mine Administrations in the event of disputes, they inform the mine managers of any evils to be redressed in connection with the efficiency and safety of labour and finally superintend the food supply of the workmen.

The members of the Mining Committees are paid from the Mine Administration funds, in accordance with their average daily wages.

The Arbitration Committee comprises the delegate of the Ministry of Labour as chairman, the delegate of the Mining Employers' Union, and the representative of the miners' Trade Unions as permanent members, and the delegates of the mine management and of the Mine Committee concerned with the question to be investigated as non permanent members.

The Commission assembles once a week. It is competent to investigate and settle all kinds of misunderstandings and conflicts which have arisen between the miners and the mine managers in the Dąbrowa mining area, on the basis of the agreements concluded between them.

This is what has been accomplished in the province of protective legislation hitherto in independent Poland. In the provinces where the new laws have not come into being, naturally, the old laws and regulations are binding. Un the latter part of the present work, the projects already prepared by the Polish Government, but not yet introduced into all the degrees of legislation, will be discussed, we will, at present pass over to the sphere of public insurance introduced into the Polish State.

## II.

### COMPULSORY INSURANCE AGAINST ILLNESS.

The at last united Polish State found on its territory two systems of insurance against illness: in the provinces regained from Prussia—the former German legislation, in Little Poland the former Austrian legislation. The provinces re-acquired from Russia, possessed no such system at all for the Russian law of the year 1912, on Sick Benefit Institutions, had not been applied to the Polish provinces under the rule of the Tsars.

The Polish law therefore was confronted with the problems of introducing in some provinces an insurance system which they lack completely, and of harmonizing all the different systems prevailing throughout the State.

The introduction to this action was the Decree of January 11-th 1919 which after a long discussion in the Commissions and at a full session of the Diet, was transformed on May 19th 1920 into a BILL OF COMPULSORY INSURANCE AGAINST ILLNESS, the today foundation of the Polish Insurance Bill containing 109 articles.

This law was introduced without delay into the districts of the former Kingdom, and in the former Prussian and Austrian provinces: the system of insurance existing there previously had to be during the course of 3 years completely adapted to this new law. On the principle of the Bill of May 19th 1920 Sickness Benefit Society had to be organized all over Poland, one in each district or in each town comprising over 50,000 inhabitants. The State Railway Officials are to have a separate Sickness Benefit Society.

To this compulsory insurance are subject all persons, regardless of sex, who are occupied as workmen or serving in other capacities—with the exception of the State officials, appointed by nomination and the directors of industrial and commercial establishments, if the latter replace

their employers directly and receive a salary exceeding 30,000 marks annually.

Besides this, cottagers and persons working with them non-permanently, are subject to insurances, and also apprentizes and assistants, even though they receive no remuneration of any kind. It also concerns all persons receiving wages in the form of provisions.

Insurance against illness in other institutions does not imply a freedom from the insurance in the Sickness Benefit Society.

Persons not obliged to belong to the Sickness Benefit Society have the right to join it, if they are not more than 45 years of age, in good health, with an annual income not exceeding 3000 marks.

Each employer is obliged to inform the Administration of the Society of the acceptance or dismissal of a workman within 3—5 days. The non-compliance with this rule involves punishment.

In order to establish the amount paid by the Society, and the shares of those belonging to it, the law divides the members according to their wages into 14 groups; the minimum legal payment (group I) has been fixed at 4 marks daily, the maximum (Group XIV) at 51 marks daily and also Article 21 of the Bill renders possible the creation of further wage-earning groups and changes the existing division in the event of changes in the wage-earning conditions, owing

to the devaluation of the Polish mark and the considerable increase arising therefrom. This Article has now been applied, 25 wage earning groups have been formed of workers earning from 6 marks to 450 marks daily.

The principal task of the Sickness Benefit Society is the granting of medical aid, and also sums to cover the funeral expenses of its members and their families, and financial support in times of illness or in childbirth.

Free medical assistance begins on the first day of illness and may last in case of necessity 26 weeks in Societies which have been in existence less than 3 years, and 39 weeks in Banks existing over that period.

The assistance comprises also the supply of medicines, bandaging, requisites, spectacles, and aid in cases of deformity and mutilation, which prevent the person from earning a livelihood, the maximum amount to be paid for relief will be defined in the Society Statute.

Besides the above supplies, the Sickness Benefit Societies give financial support for every day of inability for work, during a period not exceeding 26 weeks, beginning from the third day of the illness or, if the inability began later, from the first day of inability.

In exceptional cases, when the Bank is not in a condition to give medical aid to its members, the Insurance office may allow the Society but only for 2 months in the longest to grant ready

money in the place of medical aid, to the extent of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the average money support given to all the wage earning groups.

The financial relief amounts to 6% of the legal payment. The Society can also grant money when the case of illness in question is subject to the regulations of the Accident Insurance Law: in this one event however, the employer, or a suitable Insurance Company returns to the Sickness Insurance Company the cost of treatment and the financial relief shown.

For illness brought on expressly or owing to wilful participation in fighting etc. the Society may refuse to pay financial relief either wholly or in part.

The Society may place the sick person in hospital either with or without his consent, if the character of the illness demands this or if the patient has not respected the sick regulations, or has acted in any way contrary to the Doctors instructions. The Society pays family relief to the extent of one half of the relief money due to a member undergoing hospital treatment, who supports his family by his earnings. Sick persons, to whom the Society does not pay family relief, receive besides treatment and maintenance in hospital, 10% of their legal earnings.

One of the most important works of the Society is the granting of Maternity Relief which comprises, a) medical and midwife assistance before and during childbirth, b) Maternity relief supplies equal to the legal payment for a period

of 8 weeks of which 6 weeks at least succeed the actual birth, c) Relief for nursing-mothers in the form of provisions or money from 2 — 5 marks daily, from the termination of the Maternity relief payment for a period not exceeding 12 weeks. This sum has been increased in the spirit of Article 21 of the Statute. Medical and midwife aid, may be given to mothers at their request in maternity hospitals.

A defect in the Bill is the fact that, protection and relief are granted solely to married women.

Polish Law foresees still further insurance against illness, and funeral relief for members of the Society. The relief amounts to a 3 weeks legal payment. Finally the law mentioned above, shows assistance to the families of members of the Society, should the families be exclusively supported by them, and not subject to compulsory and free insurance. Illegitimate and legitimate children have equal rights. Members of a family receive medical aid gratis for 13 weeks, full assistance in child-birth, one half of the relief for nursing mothers, treatment in hospital for 13 weeks and funeral relief amounting to one half of the funeral relief granted to a member of the Society.

If the Sickness Benefit Society has collected reserve funds amounting to one year's expenses, it may increase the relief supplies above the usual rate, indicated in the above Statute, if, ho-



wever, the reserve funds are doubled, the Society is obliged to increase the benefits. This may be done by increasing the usual benefits or by introducing new methods of assistance for sick persons or convalescents etc.

Passing over a number of special orders, which are most liberal it must be mentioned with regard to the Benefit measures of the Sickness Benefit Societies in Poland that medical aid is shown by doctors and dentists, who have concluded agreements with the Society. The members have the right to make a free selection from amongst those who have concluded an agreement with the Society.

The normal funds of the Sickness Benefit Society are composed of the contributions of insured persons, of employers and also of subventions. The amount of the contribution should be calculated in such a manner that together with other revenues it should suffice to cover all expenses foreseen by the Society Statute, and to accumulate a reserve fund to the amount of one year's expenses, taking as an average those of the last three years.

At the foundation of the Society, the contribution of each insured member amounts to  $6\frac{1}{5}$  percent of the earnings. Compulsory members pay  $\frac{2}{5}$  of the shares falling to them, their employers  $\frac{3}{5}$ . The latter pay full shares for apprentices and assistants who do not receive remuneration of any kind. The State Treasury pays

for members who as a result of loss of work, are unable to pay the contributions, and also one half of the costs of Maternity Relief, and of aid to the families of sick members. Those insured, unable to work owing to ill-health do not pay their shares, whilst taking advantage of the benefits. This is also the case with women in child-birth who are receiving maternity relief. Free members pay the whole of the contributions themselves. A few more words on the subject of the Administration of the Sickness Benefit Society. The Authorities in the Society are: the Council of the Society, the Board of the Society, the Revision Commission and the Arbitration Commission.

The Council of the Society is formed of Delegates elected for 3 years;  $\frac{2}{3}$  of them by members insured, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  by employers. Persons of either sex, having attained 21 years of age can take advantage of the election rights. The number of delegates to the Council, may not exceed 90 persons. No one can have less than one, nor more than 30 votes. The vote is direct, secret and proportional. The Society Council elects the Board, the Revision Commission, investigates and confirms the annual report of the Administration, decides as to the conclusion of agreements with other Societies and settles within the limits of the Statute changes to be made in the Bank Statutes, and finally considers and decides upon, all cases brought forward by the Society Administration.

The Board is formed of at least 9 persons, but of not more than 18, elected by the Council whilst the Employers delegates select from amongst them  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the members of the Board and the Insured delegates  $\frac{2}{3}$ . Here also the elections are secret and proportional. The Board is elected for 3 years; every year  $\frac{1}{3}$  of each group resigns.

The Board directs the action of the Society, administrates the Society property, carries out the resolutions of the Council, presents a report to the Insurance Administration, passes first decisions on litigious questions, concerning punishments etc.

The Revision Commission is elected by the Council for one year and comprises 6 members—of which  $\frac{2}{3}$  are insured and  $\frac{1}{3}$  employers, and carries out the usual controlling action, possessing at the same time the right to suspend the resolutions of the Society Organs until the decision of the Insurance Administration has been delivered. The Arbitration Commission is formed of 5 members, 2 elected by the Workmen's delegates 2 by the Employers and one by the plenum of Council. The Arbitration Commission settles disputes concerning the relief supply between the members and the Directory of the Society, and as to the fines, which have been imposed on members.

Besides, in each Society district a Conciliation Commission is appointed to settle contentions between the Board of the Society and the Doctors. The Commissions contain an equal number of

representatives of the Society Administration and Doctors.

The juridical organs of the Public Insurance Institute appointed by the Minister of Labour and Social Survey act as appealation courts; within their sphere of authority is the general direction and State control of the Sickness Insurance Companies.

The Insurance Institute controls the due carrying out of the Bills and Statutes by the Sickness Benefit Society, generally supervises insurance questions, interprets regulations, issues instructions, confirms the Statutes of the Societies, gives decisions on disputed questions, while; an equal number of representatives from among the Employers and Workmen participate in the decisions taken.

A Delegate from the Board of Public Health participates in the Insurance Administration. Fifteen million marks have been assigned to the Sickness Benefits Society by the State Treasury, on the strength of a resolution of the Diet. †

This is the general outline of the great action of the Polish Law regarding Sickness Insurance. Its execution, temporarily interrupted by the Bolshevik Invasion, is now in full swing, and without boasting it may be said that the Polish State is entitled to be justly proud of its drawing up and realization.

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### III. LABOUR EXCHANGE AND EMIGRATION.

We arrive in due course to the problem of Labour Exchange, of such immeasurable importance for Poland, and to the question of the Emigration of the working population which is so closely connected with it.

Let us pass completely over all the efforts made by the Polish State and Communal organizations and also by numerous social institutions, during the period of German and Austrian occupation. They aimed to save an immense number of the unemployed of that period from death by starvation or from compulsory emigration to Germany. Though possessing many branches and consuming immense sums of money, this system of casual public works and allowances could be only a provisory half-measure, the utility of which had many negative qualities from a social point of view. The more so as they had to be realized among the greatest obstacles placed by the occupants, whose aim was to replace the German workmen, needed at the front, by an influx of Polish workmen forced to emigrate from their country.

Without pausing long at this period, we must, however, bear it in mind, in order to realize the situation in which Government of the present Polish State found the labour market. The labour centres in a considerable part of Poland were paralysed by the conscious tendency

of the occupants to stem the industrial life of Poland. Beside this a direct devastation of the country as a result of the war called forth a complete desorganization of the labour market which lasted in spite of the considerably decreased economic activity during the period succeeding the occupation. The former Prussian part of Poland was an exception, but it was, and still is the least interested in the problems of the unemployment and emigration, as it is a country principally agricultural and not overpopulated. It has also been long in possession of a system of Labour Exchanges, based on the general German legislation in that matter. They have been carrying on their action up till the present time, and are polonized only as regards staff, official language etc.

In order to begin energetic similar activity in other parts of Poland and above all in the most neglected Russian Poland, the Polish Government issued a decree on February 4th, 1919 concerning the organization of State Boards for Labour Exchange and for the Protection of Emigrants, and further a number of corresponding regulations and instructions. The complement of the Decree is the Law for granting allowances to the unemployed, adopted by the Diet on November 4th, 1919.

While still allowing to supply employment by the concessional private, communal and corporation Labour Exchange Bureaus, their action is regulated by the State Labour Exchange and Emigration

Boards, directly dependent on the Ministry of Labour. This form was chosen owing to the slight development of communal institutions in a considerable part of Poland. Polish trade unions could not yet be able to fulfill completely the task of regulating the labour market. Private bureaus, the existence of which will assuredly not be long-lasting cannot naturally be taken as foundation here, and a Bill carefully regulating their action has already been presented to the Cabinet.

Hence the State has taken the question of the labour market into its own hands considering the immeasurable importance of this question for Poland. The necessity for the reconstruction of economic life, ruined by the war, and the emigration movement which will undoubtedly be unavoidable for some longer time, has engendered such great problems that the State alone can manage to cope with them.

The decree of February 4th creates State offices supplying employment not only in the home market but also in the foreign markets, and protecting there the emigrants. These offices remain in permanent contact with Labour Exchange Offices existing in Poland and above all with the Employment Offices of trade unions and of the employers. Further they act on the base of the following generally accepted principles: they announce particulars of the labour market, they regulate the labour exchange between different

parts of the country, they facilitate travelling etc. Special attention has been paid to the supply of employment to the young workers. It must be accompanied by advice given as carefully as possible respecting the choice of profession of young persons seeking work, adapting it to individual capacity and physical individual strength etc.

Strong pressure is also brought to bear as to the necessity of energy and initiative to be shown by the State Offices in the action of seeking the employment and not merely a passive granting of advice to those enregistered.

In the question of the labour exchange outside Poland, the Polish State Offices carry on the emigration and immigration statistics and the investigation of foreign labour conditions as well as of all problems connected with emigration. They are bound to assure a strict fulfillment of the rule that the employment of Polish labour by foreign employers can take place on the approval of the Minister of Labour and solely according to contracts confirmed by the said Ministry.

Protection of emigrants takes on various forms: communication between them and their families at home, assistance in money sending, supplying of informations, organization of educational work (small travelling libraries etc.), assistance and encouragement to return home etc. Special emigration attachés sent by the Ministry



of Labour are attached to several Polish legations abroad (New-York, Chicago, Paris, Berlin and Kuritiba) who organize a protective action for emigrants in foreign towns, supplying them with home information etc. Polish consulates are also obliged to superintend these matters.

At the head of the labour exchange and emigration organizations is the competent section in the Ministry of Labour and Public Protection the subordinate organs of which are the local offices scattered throughout the Country.

Advice and control organs are under consideration but not yet completely organized: an Advisory Commission attached to the Ministry, appointed by the Minister, formed of representatives of the administrative authorities, the workmen's and employers' trade unions, social institutions and experts, and Control Commissions attached to the town offices, formed of workmen, employers and a non-party president, all elected by the local self-governing body. The competency of these Commissions will be very extensive.

A practical realization of the Decree of February 4th is very far advanced in the former Russian province, where there existed 46 Commissions at the end of the year 1919. During the past year Labour Exchange Boards have been also organized on the territories of Little Poland; the supply of employment by these

Boards is gratis for those seeking work, but employers must pay according to a tariff.

This is the legislative organization of this question. In order, however, to suitably illustrate the significance and wide dimensions which it has acquired in Poland, certain information cannot here be omitted concerning the question of the unemployed in the period of the early existence of the new Polish State. We will give at first some figures.

Directly after the organization of the Labour Exchange Offices an accurate registration of the unemployed was carried out, from which registration, carefully controlled, depends the granting of allowances.

It appeared that on April 1st, 1919 there were 323,278 unemployed registered and confirmed, on May 1st, 1919 — 347,999, on June 1st, 1919—354,222; on July 1st, 1919—318,329, and it is only from this period that their number began to decrease. State assistance appeared in two forms: the granting of allowances in money and provisions and the supply of employment in specially provided public works. The allowances were granted as follows: on April 1st, 1919 — 210,883 persons received them, on May 1st, 1919 — 247,893, on June 1st, 1919 — 209,509. In total, up till July, 1919 — 111,585,178 marks were paid away for this end. In May and June the unemployed received 943 tons of flour, 2538 tons of grease, 4890 tons of potatoes, 83 tons of

salt etc. Gradually an effort was made to reduce the cash allowances by employment in public works. In January, 1919 the Government assigned for this end 100 million marks, and the municipal and country self-government institutions began a series of works of public utility in order to supply work to the unemployed. On June 1st, 1919 the number of people working in these above mentioned Public Works was 71,735, on June 15th it had already reached 83,976, on July 1st — 92,652. The workmen were supplied by the State Employment Supply Offices.

Recently, although Polish economic life is still far remote from its pre-war intensity (for instance the most industrial town in Poland, — Lodz, employs about 30% of its former number of workmen), it has, however, become strengthened to such a degree that the payment of allowances to the unemployed is considerably diminished. Public Works are taking on a purely profitable character, and the provisory and philanthropical stamp which distinguished it at the beginning has, as we have already remarked, completely left it.

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The above legislative acts concerning the protection of emigrants are the introductory phase to the issuing of a fundamental general Emigration Law, the scheme of which has been nearly entirely worked up by the Ministry. In close con-

nection with this scheme the Polish Government has organized a number of institutions, corresponding to most urgent needs in these matters.

Firstly, an action was organized in order to come to the assistance of the Polish workmen left in Germany. A part of them, about 300,000, were detained there compulsorily at the outbreak of the war (it was the chief season of labourers emigration). Others, about 400,000, were compelled to work in the German factories by the already mentioned orders of the Prussian Occupation authorities, during the period from 1915 to 1918. Both these categories were threatened worse than Pariahs, with a complete disregard of all human rights and all legislative orders, and morally and financially injured to the highest degree.

Therefore the *Central Office for the Revendication of the Rights of Polish Emigrants* was organized. It concerns different questions, such as for instance, compensation for compulsory emigration, for the imposition of unjust taxes, for the withholding of security-money, for breach of contracts, for illegal fines, for journey expenses, for the withholding of wages due or of the movable property of the emigrants, for the confiscation of the belongings of deceased emigrants etc. etc. The second revendication category includes the questions connected with the German Insurance Law, as the majority of emigrants were not paid the sickness, lodging and maternity

allowances, nor those due for accidents while working, for funeral and illness expenses etc. A proof of the immense wrong done to these workmen is the fact that, during the period from January 1st to August 1st, 1919, the Polish authorities registered 118139 revendication claims sent in. The total sum of the workmen's dues is reckoned at from 1½ to 2 milliard marks. Owing to the fact that the payment of the above sum by the German Government is likely to be long delayed, the Polish Government has assigned funds for the immediate payment of the most incontestable compensations, namely first of all those due to widows and orphans of workmen who had died or been killed in Germany.

Further *Information Offices* on a wide scale were organized in connection with the Emigration Protection Offices. On the one hand they searched lost emigrants gratis, sent correspondence between the emigrants and their families, gave advice concerning the travelling conditions, facilitated the passport question and the sending of money etc.

A control over the emigration movement has also been organized, a struggle has been carried on with clandestine emigration agents, and the monopoly of the sale of ship tickets has been introduced. A part of the above action is now in the hands of the Polish Emigration Attachés already mentioned, and besides this in certain frontier centres and in several ports there

are Emigration Inspectors bound to help the emigrants and those re-emigrating.

Finally the question now under consideration was the ground for the first important international convention concluded by independent Polish State. It is *the Convention* concluded on October 3rd, 1919 between Poland and France in the matter of *Polish emigration to France*. It regulates the emigration and immigration, the locating and despatch of the emigrant's savings, the granting of rent and allowances, if the emigrants could not find work — and above all it unifies the labour conditions according to three types of labour agreements: for the industrial workmen, for the labourers, and for the special category employed in rebuilding North-Eastern France. Without entering into the particulars of the mentioned Convention we will merely state that it aims at the protection of the Polish emigrants from the exploitation and helplessness to which they would most assuredly have fallen victims had not the emigration conditions been established in advance. It is true that, in spite of the existence of this convention, certain complaints arrive from Polish emigrants to France. But they can undoubtedly be removed by additional orders to the Convention, excepted some unavoidable negative sides always accompanying emigration into a foreign country.

We pass over a number of important but casual orders of the Polish Government concerning

the labour question, as for instance the increase of the workmen's food rations, the protection of the children of the working classes etc. Yet we must draw attention to some decisions of special importance.

To this category belong:

1) The establishment of the *Committee for the Investigation of the Cost of Living*. This Committee is attached to the State Statistic Board and is composed of representatives of both the workers and employers. It establishes every month the prices of products and goods, indispensable for the maintenance of the workman and his family. The decisions of this Commission influence directly the wages of the workmen: nearly all collective agreements between the workmen's organizations and those of the employers, concluded under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, contain clauses according to which the wages of the workmen increase proportionally to the rise of prices fixed by the said Commission. The introduction of these clauses is due to the support exerted by the Labour Ministry to the workmen's propositions.

It is superfluous to write of the enormous significance of this sliding scale. It is sufficient to state that it mitigated the strike wave in Poland. This fact is evident since its introduction; the labour wages, however, have increased so considerably that they are a frequent cause for jealousy, for instance of State officials, teachers etc. h, It

2) The interference of Labour Inspectors at the conclusion of *collective agreements* in industry and agriculture has led to a fundamental transformation of the former chaos in the most trades. During the last year, the collective agreements became the foundation of the labour conditions nearly throughout entire Poland. Although the changeableness of the general conditions of present day life in Poland does not yet allow the conclusion of agreements for long periods, and has not removed entirely all disputes between Capital and Labour, still the collective agreements are an immense step onward in this sphere of action.

They became already so important in the public life that they gave to the Ministry the possibility of drawing up a special Bill regarding collective agreements—of which we shall speak further in the last part of this work.

3) *Participation of Poland in the Washington Labour Congress*, her union with the resolutions passed there and the participation in the International Labour Bureau attached to the League of Nations. Conventions accepted in Washington have been either already realized in Polish legislation, or else will be discussed in the Polish Diet in the near future.

The delegate from the Polish Government is a member of the Administrative Council of the International Labour Bureau in Geneva, and takes an animated share in all the social and political action of this institution.

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Such is up till now the Polish legislation concerning directly the labour question and introduced by the Polish Ministry of Labour and Public Protection. The above sketch, however, would not give a sufficient picture of Polish social policy, were we not to complete it in a very few words by indicating a number of Polish laws concerning not exclusively the working classes, yet closely connected with their position and their interests. To this category belong first of all the following statutes, decrees and laws:

1) *The Land Reform Bill* accepted by the Diet on July 15th, 1920, according to which the maximum of land property of private persons was established in Poland. The maximum varies between 180 and 400 hectares, conforming to the quality of the land and to the State province. The land acquired, after compensation has been paid to the owners, is subjected to parcellation amongst peasants who are landless or possess little land, and also for workmen colonies in the neighbourhood of the larger towns. This process will naturally take a considerable time. At present there is going on the parcelling-out of estates badly cultivated or neglected and of certain parts of State domains.

2) *Bill* dated August 1st, 1919, concerning the formation of a *State Housing Fund*. This Bill is intended to facilitate the building of houses with small and cheap hygienic apartments.

It requires the financial assistance of the State for communal magistrates, housing cooperatives, public institutions and even private individuals who undertake the action of building houses of the character mentioned. The State Housing Fund is formed of sums allotted annually to the State budget.

It must also be remarked with regard to the Housing question, that there exists in the Polish State a *Law for Protection of Hirers* binding from July 3rd, 1919, According to this Law the rent for an apartment of one or two rooms cannot exceed the sum paid in June, 1914, while for a 3 roomed apartment the increase cannot be more than 10 per cent. This Law establishes Arbitration Offices for hirers questions and moratorium for the unemployed and for wives of soldiers.

Already previously, on March 25-th, 1919, an Order issued by the Ministry of Public Health introduced in all towns and communes a *Housing Inspection* which was to investigate the state of apartments, their sanitary conditions, the number of persons living in them—etc., and also to make all efforts against the lack of apartments. Each Housing Inspection summons on its territory of action the so-called Housing Guardians or protectors furnished with special instructions. It must be said that the long years of war, the dearness of materials and workmen, etc. have nearly completely stemmed the building movement in Poland, and as a result of this the Hou-

sing Inspections are not yet able to develop to their full extent.

3) Formation of *Public Protection Commissions* attached to self-government bodies. These Commissions are intended to coordinate the work of all public and private protection institutions existing in a given district, to control them and to show initiative in this province of action. The Ministry of Labour and Public Protection, on its side, possesses its delegate to the Public Protection Commission in every district. He carries on the supervision and is mediator between the institutions in the district and the State authorities. Public Protection concerns every kind of public charity. The State grants subsidies if they are needed.

4) The last of the Bills, already formally accepted in the Polish State and specially important for the working classes, is the *Cooperative Societies Bill*, passed by the Diet on October 29th 1920. This is a great legislative work carefully prepared during 1½ years and discussed in a series of Commissions. It combines in one whole all the regulations concerning cooperative societies and gives them, on condition of their retaining real cooperative characteristics, a number of rights and privileges. The Bill establishes a general National Cooperative Council for helping the Government in its activity as to the cooperation problems. This Bill is the first step in Europe to a synthesis of

cooperative legislation and to creation of a certain kind of Cooperative Constitution. It corresponds to the great development of the cooperative movement in Poland, especially in its former Prussian part, and to the great hopes arising on the ground of this movement. Polish cooperative industrial and provident associations are formed for the greater part of representatives of the working classes, hence the Bill of which we speak possesses a special significance for the workmen.

We terminate here the survey of the most important legislative acts of the young Polish Republic concerning direct labour problems already established by competent legislative bodies.

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The last part of the present work will comprise bills of the Ministry of Labour and Public Protection already drawn up which have been, or will be in the near future, presented to the Diet. It cannot be doubted that most of them, probably all of them, with more or less change will be accepted by the Diet.

#### NEXT LEGISLATIVE BILLS.

Amongst the most important Bills belonging to this category the first place is occupied by those connected with the Labour Conference in Washington and the ratification of the conventions concluded there.

In consideration of the fact, that the Law of the 46 hours' working day in Poland has already been legally introduced—and this to a wider extent than in Washington's convention — this question demands no fundamental legislative regulation, but only accurate instructions and supervision as to their execution. The Polish Ministry of Labour is continually active in this direction.

However, legislative acts already long worked up and at present in conformity with the Washington decisions will be very shortly: the *Women's Labour Bill*, the *Bill of Children's Labour in Industry* and further the extension of the Law concerning the *Unemployment*. All these statutes correspond, and in several cases are in advance, of similar legislative regulations in other civilized countries. Without entering into details of these statutes, it is sufficient to state the following as to the work of women and young persons: a 2 hours, rest has been granted in a labour day of eight hours, and one and a half hours rest in a labour day of 6 hours; work between 9 p. m. and 6 a. m. is prohibited; the weekly rest must amount to 36 successive hours; women's labour underground and labour before and after child-birth is forbidden; a rule will forbid the labour of children under 14 years of age, there will be also a number of restrictions respecting the labour of young persons up till the age of 18 years, etc.

With regard to the unemployment and action to be taken against it, Polish legislation follows the way of a wide Unemployment Insurance. At present compulsory regulations (see above) concerning the organization of Labour Exchange Offices and unemployment allowances for workmen form an important preparation for far-reaching insurance in these matters.

A Bill concerning a question very neglected in Poland, owing to the former regulations being quite out of date, which have served to regulate it, is the *Servants' Labour Bill*. It renders the position of domestic servants similar to that of other working classes from many points of view. In the place of existing „service books” based on a very far-reaching dependence from employers, the usual wage books are introduced, and also regulations for the form of service agreement, the length of the working day, recreations, lodging, hard labour, protection of young servants on 14—18 years of age and the obligation of their training etc. The Bill creates conciliation courts for disputes and commissions formed of municipal representatives, employers and servants, which will have the right of regulating the local minimum wages of the domestic servants. In a word, the Polish Servants' Law will be one of the most advanced in Europe.

*The Collective Agreements Bill* which has been long worked up by the Ministry, is of great fundamental importance for the development of so-

cial conditions in Poland; it is entirely finished and will shortly be sent to the Cabinet and the Diet. This Bill is of special value because collective agreements, as we have already stated, both in industry and in agriculture are very common, and it is necessary to create general legal rules for them. The Polish Bill bases collective agreements on free agreement of the parties, and limits the authority of the State in these matters to a minimum. The maximum duration of the agreement is fixed at one year. Each collective agreement should be deposited at the competent Labour Inspector. The conclusion of individual contracts with members of groups or organizations which have concluded a collective agreement, is only allowed under conditions foreseen in the collective agreement; less favourable conditions are not binding and must be replaced by conditions of the collective agreement. The withdrawal from the organization which concluded the agreement is possible in a certain fairly short period, after the expiration of which the collective agreement concluded by the organization must be adhered to.

As far as regards public insurance one of the next acts of Polish legislation will be the *Accident Insurance Law*. Hitherto three annexive systems have been in Poland, but none of them suits the demands and conditions of to-day.

The scheme of the Ministry of Labour extends Accident Insurance to all the wages receiving workers without exception, regardless of their sex, age, character and the existence or nonexistence of a labour contract. The extent of obligation, however, is proportional to the amount of wages received, for instance employers are subject to insurance to a degree corresponding with their payment for their personal labour in the character of director of the business. Insurance is also to be extended to accidents at work and those resulting from work — and this both on territory occupied by the establishment itself and beyond its boundaries.

Besides medical aid, from the first day of illness, the victim of the accident is to receive in cash 75% of his former daily wages. At a permanent and complete invalidity he gets 100% of his average annual pay, and in cases of partial invalidity a corresponding lower percentage. The widow of a workman killed by an accident is to receive  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the insurance amount, legitimate or illegitimate children up till 18 years of age  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the insurance allowance, and orphans —  $\frac{1}{4}$ . In several cases relations or in general, persons supported by the deceased may receive a part of the insurance money. The rent may be capitalized, should it not exceed 15% of the annual wages of the deceased.



Accident Insurance is to be based exclusively on the payments of the employers. The organization includes a Central Insurance Company, District Companies and as local units Sickness Benefit Societies. Members of the Insurance Offices will be, besides representatives of the Government, representatives of the employers and of the workmen.

The great emigration problem is concerned in two bills prepared by the Ministry of Labour: *The Emigrants Labour Exchange Bill* and a general *Emigration Bill*. The first of these allows the supplying of labour abroad only through State Offices or through workmen's trade unions for their own members. But the trade union must be a legal person, in existence at least 2 years, and comprising at least 100 members.

The Emigration Bill is intended to give a full protection to emigrants without hindering the emigration. Restrictions concern solely the young emigrants, the persons bound to Military Service or under juridicial examination, and also the emigration to countries which present for the emigrants special material, moral or legal danger. The Bill regulates a wide informative and educational action and continuous protection of emigrants against all kinds of exploitation and abuse.

Its general character is very similar to the Italian Emigration Law.

At the termination of the present work I have to mention several more bills being under

consideration now by the Polish Ministry of Labour and Public Protection, and possessing special importance. They are:

1) *A general Bill for Public Protection*, regulating, according to a rational sentiment and general interest, the public assistance for all citizens deprived of the possibility of supporting themselves by their own labour. This Bill breaks off with the system of philanthropy and introduces in its place the right of citizens particularly illtreated by fate, to receive the protection of the society.

2) *A Labour Disputes Bill* which is to unite all the regulations concerning disputes arising from labour conditions.

3) *A Labour Council Bill* establishes an organ attached to the Ministry and formed of representatives of the employers, workers and experts having to give their joint aid in the preparation of labour bills.

4) *A Labourer's Protection Bill*, and finally

5) *A Labour Bill* dealing with the Sweating System.

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We have attained the end of our work. We believe that the above glance at the not long-existing efforts of the Polish State in the domain of labour legislation will sufficiently prove the importance which the Nation, Government and Diet of Poland attach to this new side of

their life. They have to take swift steps in realizing an action which the political bondage of the last century did not allow Poland to accomplish, while all other civilized Nations were working with unchangeable intensity at the creation of their social legislation.

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